

Capital Punishment

Position One: Capital Punishment Is Necessary

Capital punishment (killing criminal offenders) is justified. For those people who commit the most violent and perverse crimes, capital punishment is the only answer. A crime demands justice, and the only way justice can be served for these violent crimes is execution.

Capital punishment serves as a deterrent to potential murderers. Without it, murderers would be guaranteed survival, something their victims are deprived of. Severe punishment generates respect for the law among people who don't have much respect for anything else.

Capital punishment also saves money, since prisons are expensive. We spend far too much money on people who have thrown their lives away.

Defend your position.

Position Two: Capital Punishment Is Unnecessary

Capital punishment is wrong. Murdering someone because he or she is a murderer is not a good practice. Do we rape rapists or burn down the homes of arsonists?

Giving the state the power to kill is dangerous. This power breaks down one more barrier of protection for the individual, especially individuals who are mistakenly convicted. Execution doesn't allow for correcting errors.

Capital punishment discriminates against the poor and minorities, since they are far more likely than wealthy whites to be sentenced to death for the same crime.

Capital punishment is not a deterrent. Western European countries do not have capital punishment and murder is rare. States in the United States that have capital punishment often have higher murder rates than those that don't.

Defend your position.